

AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS

Claims 1 – 22 (canceled)

5 Claim 23 (currently amended): An optical packet switching method for switching inputted optical packets over NW wavelengths, the inputted optical packets comprising optical packets having different attributes of a characteristic based on delay sensitivity, the optical packets having different attributes of a
10 characteristic based on delay sensitivity also comprise optical packets having different attributes of a characteristic based on optical packet bit-rate range, and ~~where~~ NW is an integer greater than one, the method comprising:

grouping the NW wavelengths into KG groups of wavelengths both according to the different attributes of the characteristic based on delay sensitivity
15 and according to the different attributes of the characteristic based on optical packet bit-rate range so that each of the KG groups of wavelengths is allocated to optical packets having both a common delay sensitivity level and a common bit-rate range which ~~is~~ are different from at least one of the following: a delay sensitivity level of other optical packets; and a bit-rate range of other optical packets, where KG is an
20 integer greater than one; and

switching each one inputted optical packet over a wavelength having an available transmission resource selected from among wavelengths in one of said KG groups of wavelengths that is matched to the one inputted optical packet by correspondence of both a delay sensitivity level and a bit-rate range.

25 Claim 24 (previously presented): The method according to claim 23 and wherein said grouping comprises allocating more wavelengths to delay sensitive optical packets than to delay insensitive optical packets.

30 Claim 25 (previously presented): The method according to claim 23 and wherein the inputted optical packets comprise Internet Protocol (IP) packets.